

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: March 25, 2002

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-77)

TO: Linda Hermeston KEWL
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Methow Valley Fish Screening Project, McKinney Mountain Screen Replacement and Rockview Screen Decommissioning and Replacement with a Well

Project No: 2001-063-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.15 Fish Passage Enhancement-Fishways; 4.20 Well Construction for Primary Water Source; 4.23 Intake and Return Diversion Screens; 4.25 Consolidate/Replace Irrigation Diversion Dams; 9.23 Construction: Erosion and Sediment Control Structures

Location: Okanogan County, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Yakima Screen Shop (YSS)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA is proposing to fund a project sponsored by the WDFW that would provide immediate and long-term protection for anadromous and resident fish species in the Methow River about 7 to 10 miles northwest of Winthrop. The proposal has two parts: 1) replace an out-of-criteria fishscreening facility on McKinney Mountain irrigation canal with a modern design, and 2) decommission the fish screen on the Rockview irrigation canal and replace it with a well.

Originally, the project included fish screen replacements at the Kumn Holloway and Foghorn sites. The Kumn Holloway project has found other funding, no longer involving BPA. And, the Foghorn screen replacement has been categorically excluded from further NEPA documentation by the lead agency, the USFWS, by memo of 9/17/2001. BPA adopted the USFWS analysis and issued a similar categorical exclusion memo for Foghorn screen replacement on 12/12/2001.

Analysis: The SEPA environmental compliance checklists and Determinations of Nonsignificance for both parts of this project were completed by the WDFW. The original BPA NEPA checklist covering the original screening projects was completed and signed by Eric Egbers, Fish Screening Program Manager for WDFW YSS as grantee, assisted by Shannon Stewart of BPA. Mickey Carter of BPA revised that NEPA checklist as the project changed to entail only McKinney Mountain and Rockview, and as more environmental work concluded.

As it is now, this project meets the standards and guidelines for the BPA Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The proposed activities would primarily occur in and along canals and diversions connected to the Methow River. The Methow River contains bull trout and Upper Columbia River spring Chinook salmon and steelhead - all Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species. Potentially suitable habitat for other ESA animals is nearby but does not involve the project sites. No suitable habitat for ESA listed plant species is associated with any of the project sites.

Biological assessments of effects to ESA listed species were provided to USFWS and NMFS in winter 2001-2002. Both agencies concurred without objections or stipulations to findings of "may affect but not likely to adversely affect" species and potentially suitable habitat under their jurisdictions.

The fish screen at McKinney Mountain was constructed in 1953, and is considered not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because it is a more recent version of the rolling-drum type fish screen. It sits in a canal, crossing agricultural land that has been roaded, irrigated and farmed/plowed for several decades. The ground around the fish screen site is covered by large amounts of material dredged from the bottom of the canal over time. No archeological or historic cultural resources were recorded during the intensive field survey conducted by Archeological and Historic Resources (AHS) around the screen site, or through the background literature review. No Traditional Cultural Properties were identified through the site file search. So, no impacts to cultural resources are expected at this site. A letter requesting concurrence with this finding was sent to the Washington State Office of Archeology and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville in March, 2002, along with the detailed report written by AHS.

The Rockview well would be located on agricultural land owned by the WDFW, the proponent of this project. The site is along a native surface, spot-rocked road in a field that has been irrigated, grazed and farmed for several decades, and would continue to be used that way in the future. No historic or prehistoric artifacts were apparent on the ground surface when surveyed by Mickey Carter, BPA, in November 2001. Given present site conditions and the limited impacts associated with drilling a 10-inch well in a farmed field next to a road and existing underground supply line for the lateral wheel line irrigation system, it is very unlikely that any cultural resources would be newly impacted. Decommissioning the Rockview fish screen is also not likely to have any new impact to cultural resources since the screen (built in 1965) and canal would not be removed or obliterated at this time, only taken out of service. However, site surveys by AHS will be performed prior to drilling the well, and if any cultural resources are discovered, the Washington State Office of Archeology and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville would be consulted prior to undertaking any ground disturbing activities.

The McKinney Mountain screen replacement and the Rockview well drilling/screen decommissioning would take place off channel and the associated irrigation ditches would be shut-off or bypassed so that work can occur in the dry. Each project is expected to take only a few days to complete. Given these conditions, these projects would not require state or federal permits to proceed. In the unlikely event that work cannot be accomplished in the dry,

appropriate in-stream work permits would be obtained prior to construction including any required Washington State permit and Corps of Engineers 404 permit.

The landowners involved in the McKinney Mountain screen replacement project and the McKinney Mountain Irrigation District (operators of the diversion and fish screen) are taking part on a voluntary basis, and no water rights would be affected by the fish screen replacement. WDFW has the only proven water right affected by the Rockview diversion and well.

Public comment and involvement of other potential stakeholders occurred through the SEPA and JARPA processes. The project proponents have contacted affected tribes, state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, local governments, and nearby landowners and irrigation companies about the program.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Watershed Management Program that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Watershed Management Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Mickey A. Carter

Mickey A. Carter

Environmental Protection Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 3-26-2002

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist (2)

Washington SHPO Response Letter

USFWS and NMFS Letters of Concurrence (3)

cc: (w/o attachments)

Eric Egbers, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Yakima Screen Shop

Jim Mountjoy, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Big Valley Unit, Winthrop, WA

bcc: (w/o attachments)

L. Croff - KEC-4

N. Weintraub - KEC-4

P. Key - LC-7

H. Adams – LC-7

bcc: (w/ attachments)

Official File - KEC (EQ-14)

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